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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News (MN 01-14) Apr. 13, 2001

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MN011401. New UTI Treatment Option Available for Women

Pensacola, FL - Infections of the urinary tract are common - only respiratory infections occur more often. According to DoD statistics, more than 120,000 patient visits were made to military treatment facilities to get treatment for urinary tract infections (UTI).

Women are especially prone to UTI. One woman in five develops a UTI during her lifetime, and many have recurrences.

Now, thanks to a Navy-funded pilot program tested at Naval Hospital (NH) Pensacola, women from ages 18 to 55 who get their health care from the Military Health System (MHS) may have a new option for getting treatment for their UTI - and it's only a phone call away.

Three hundred women who called to make appointments because of UTI symptoms were given the option of seeing a healthcare provider in a clinic or talking to one over the telephone to diagnose and get medication for the infection. About half the women chose the telephone for its convenience and immediacy.

"The pilot program had great results," said CDR Rick Stoermann, MC, a coordinator of the pilot program at NH Pensacola. "Our patients got quicker treatment, and our study results show that it was just as safe and effective as coming into the clinic or visiting the emergency room."

Women were prescribed three days of antibiotics that are very effective against most UTI.

"This telephone option isn't for everyone," said Stoermann. "Women who have other symptoms not consistent with UTIs, or who aren't in the target population are asked to make an appointment. The Pensacola study helped us develop strict guidelines for our healthcare providers to make sure the telephone option is the most sensible option for the patient."

Women who have suffered from UTIs will tell you that the sooner they can get treatment, the better. Symptoms can be uncomfortable, including a frequent urge to urinate, a painful burning in the area of the bladder during urination, and an overall tired, shaky, washed out feeling. Some may even feel pain when not urinating.

Ultimately, most medical facilities in the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration will have the telephone treatment option for UTI, using the guidelines established by the pilot program at NH Pensacola.

In addition to providing quicker, efficient and safe care for women with UTI, the new option has the potential of saving the MHS money - enough to fund ten fulltime healthcare professionals.

By Jan Davis, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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MN011402. Navy Supports Operation Provide Hope 2001

Tbilisi, Georgia - Medical personnel from the naval hospitals in Naples, Okinawa, Camp Lejeune, Portsmouth, and Pensacola will pitch in to assist with Operation Provide Hope, a support project that transfers excess medical equipment and supplies to the Republic of Georgia.

The first phase of the operation began Apr. 9 with a site survey and technical assessment. The next phases will include procuring materials and parts to keep equipment running and training for Georgia's medical personnel on its use and maintenance.

Operation Provide Hope is a continuing operation that provides excess medical materials and training to republics of the former Soviet Union as they transition to democratic and free market states. U.S. Naval Forces Europe has the lead for the joint Army and Navy operation.

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MN011403. Navy Docs Featured on Discovery Program

Gaithersburg, MD - When a 9-1-1 call goes out to the Navy for help, it usually means calling in aircraft and ships. But when the family of a woman with a mysterious illness needed help, they called Navy doctors CAPT Stephen Hoffman and CAPT Thomas Richie.

The woman recently returned from the tropics of South America when she fell ill and was taken to a local hospital. She soon fell into a coma. In a desperate attempt to diagnose and treat her illness, the family contacted the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. The society referred her to Hoffman and Richie. Both are tropical infectious disease specialists; Hoffman is also a world renowned expert in malaria.

The physicians were quickly able to diagnose the woman with cerebral malaria with multiple complications. Their recommended treatment was successful in bringing her out of the coma and into recovery.

Their story will be featured on the Discovery Channel's "Parasites Are Eating Us Alive," to be aired Saturday, May 5 at 9 p.m. eastern time.

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MN011404. Chiropractic Clinic Saves Aching Backs

Bethesda, MD - Got an aching back? Some naval medical facilities may offer a treatment choice that wasn't available too long ago.

The chiropractic clinic at the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda has been around for a little more than two years, offering the alternative of treating pain with manipulation instead of surgery or more invasive medical treatments.

There are eight chiropractors Navy-wide. Two practice in the department of chiropractics at Bethesda. The Navy began offering chiropractic services when many medical insurance companies accepted the alternative treatment.

By JOSN Rebecca Whitney, NNMC Bethesda, MD

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MN011405. Foot & Mouth Prevention for Navy Travelers

Portsmouth, VA - The spread of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Europe has drawn worldwide concern. It's a serious, highly contagious viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed livestock with fever and blister-like lesions and erosions on the tongue and lips, in the mouth, on the teats, and between the hooves.

Fortunately, the disease doesn't infect humans, said CDR Wesley Emmons, MC, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's head of infectious disease. But people should still use caution when traveling to countries where the disease is found.

"One way the disease is transmitted is by contaminated soil," said Emmons. "It reproduces itself through the nose and mouth of an infected animal, leading to secretions that drop onto the soil. So, someone coming from a farm in England may have contaminated soil on his or her shoes. If that person goes onto a farm in Sussex, Virginia, that could possibly lead to FMD contamination."

Household pets such as cats and dogs may also be carriers.

"If an animal is coming from overseas, it should be kept apart from livestock for at least five days to minimize the chances for spreading the disease," said Emmons.

There are numerous ways for people to help curtail the spread of FMD, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

- Don't bring prohibited food items and other products such as soiled footwear and clothing into the country.

- Ensure luggage, packages, and mail are free of prohibited meats, dairy products, and other at-risk items before they are shipped into the U.S.

- Make note of visits to farms, ranches, or other areas where livestock are raised or kept. This also includes visits to zoos, circuses, fairs and other facilities and events where livestock and animals are exhibited.

- Shower and shampoo before and after returning to the U.S. from an FMD-infected country. If any contact with livestock has been made while in an FMD-infected country, avoid all contact with livestock, zoo animals, or wildlife for five days after returning to the United States.

For more information on actions to protect the U.S. from FMD, access the USDA's website at www.usda.gov.

By JO2 Duke Richardson, NMC Portsmouth

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MN011406. San Diego Tests Chem-Bio Decontamination Station

San Diego - When Naval Medical Center San Diego conducted a chemical-biological drill recently, it also tested its new mass casualty decontamination station.

"This is the first mass casualty decontamination station in San Diego County," said CDR Lynn Welling, MC, head of the center's emergency management committee.

Welling said the station is capable of chemical, biological and radiological decontamination.

The station, located outdoors in front of the center's emergency room, consists of several large showerheads in a row creating three shower lanes for contaminated patients to walk under and scrub down with soap and water or, if necessary, bleach, which will neutralize most contaminants.

The station can decontaminate more than 100 ambulatory patients per hour. All of the contaminants are isolated in a containment system.

NMC San Diego has a mutual aid agreement with the county's emergency management organization that includes sharing resources and decontamination capabilities in the event of a real chemical-biological incident.

By JO1 Sonya Ansarov, NMC San Diego

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MN011407. CAPT Haynes, MC, INDIANAPOLIS Hero, Dies

CAPT Lewis L. Haynes, MC, retired, died last month at his home in Florida. He was 89.

Haynes was the USS INDIANAPOLIS' doctor when he survived its torpedoing and sinking. Despite suffering serious burns, he provided aid and inspiration to fellow survivors. He spent his 110 hours in the water caring for the injured, providing advice and burying the dead.

The INDIANAPOLIS was returning from delivering Little Boy and Fat Man, the atomic bombs that would bring World War II to a speedy end, when it was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. Of the 1,199 crewmembers, only 321 survived their injuries from the torpedoing, the exposure, and shark attacks.

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MN011408. Portsmouth ISO Photographs, Memorabilia

Portsmouth, VA - Do you have photographs, memorabilia or memories of Naval Medical Center (NMC) Portsmouth's Building 1? Portsmouth would like to hear from you.

For the last 18 months, the building that was the nation's first naval hospital has been undergoing renovations. When it has its rebirth later this year, NMC Portsmouth wants to celebrate with a retrospective of the building's past as well as a salute to the men and women who worked there. Materials donated or loaned by individuals will be the centerpieces of the display.

For more information about the retrospective or the commemorative ceremony, write to: NMC Portsmouth, 620 John Paul Jones Circle, Portsmouth, VA 23708.

The foundation for Building 1 was laid on Apr. 2, 1827. Patients were admitted in 1830, even though only one of the hospital's wings was completed. Construction was completed in 1833. It ceased to serve as a healthcare facility Apr. 30, 1999.

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MN011409. Bremerton's Yake and Watson in National Limelight

Bremerton, WA - Two Naval Hospital (NH) Bremerton staff have been recognized for their involvement in activities that will make a difference in healthcare nationwide.

Susan Yake received the 2001 Diabetes Care and Dietetic Practice Group Legislative (DC&DEPG) Activity Award, and Donna Watson was elected as president of the National Association of Operating Room Nurses (NAORN).

Yake, a hospital registered dietician since 1986, worked with the DC&DEPG, a sub-group of the American Dietetic Association, a national organization with over 70,000 members, to shape legislative change on nutritional services funding.

Watson, a family nurse practitioner in the Women's Wellness Clinic, started her career 20 years ago in labor and delivery and was elected president of the NAORN's 41,000 members. Her term begins in April 2002.

By Judith Robertson, NH Bremerton

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MN011410. Toland Awarded Top Healthcare Exec at ACHE Congress

Chicago - LCDR Paul Toland, MSC, of U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, JA, was awarded the American College of Healthcare Executive's Navy Career Healthcare Executive Award.

This award is presented annually to the Navy healthcare executive who has demonstrated innovative management and exceptional leadership ability.

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MN011411. 29 Palms HM Named Pacific Marine's SOY

Twentynine Palms, CA - HM1 Major F. Warren of Robert E. Bush

Naval Hospital at Twentynine Palms, CA, is the Marine Forces Pacific Sailor of the Year.

Warren competed with all Sailors at Marine shore commands in the Pacific theater. He is now in the running for the CINCPACFLT Sailor of the Year. If selected, Warren will be advanced to HMC. By RP2 Brandon Grigsby, Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms

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MN011412. Asthma Broadcast Participants Eligible for CEC Credits

"A Public Health Response to Asthma," a live satellite broadcast for healthcare professionals who treat individuals with asthma, will be transmitted from 1 to 3:30 p.m. eastern time Thursday, May 17.

The broadcast is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and other agencies. To tune into the satellite program, you must have a steerable antenna capable of receiving either C or KU-satellite transmissions and the satellite coordinates for the program. Information is available at www.cdc.gov/phtn/asthma.

The broadcast will include discussions on asthma as an escalating health problem, intervention programs and resources available.

Continuing education credits for this program and other CDC satellite broadcasts are available. Visit www.cdc.gov/phtn for more information. Sites must register by Apr. 17 to receive course materials.

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MN011413. TRICARE Question and Answer

Question: I have been happy with the care and service my family and I have received with TRICARE until recently. Who can I talk to about what I feel is poor service?

Answer: Any grievance should be reported to the Military Treatment Facility Commander or the Lead Agent in your region if you were treated at a military facility.

Usually, the regional Managed Care Support contractor is responsible for resolving grievances for any services provided by civilian network providers under TRICARE. Contact the nearest TRICARE Service Center (TSC) for assistance. You can find the nearest TSC near you by visiting the TRICARE website at www.tricare.osd.mil/tricarecenters.

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MN011414. HealthWatch: Can't Smell the Roses?

Does tiptoeing through the tulips literally make you sick? You're not alone. Millions of people suffer from seasonal allergies and it's that time of year again!

The terms "hay fever" and "rose fever" were used by English farmers who blamed hay and flowers as the culprit for symptoms that include watery, itchy eyes, a constant runny nose, sneezing, headache, and sore throat.

Allergic rhinitis - the medical term for hay fever - is seasonal due to the cycle of weeds and grasses. People with pollen allergies often mistake the yellow flower pollen that covers their cars in the morning as the cause. Most often microscopic grains of pollen released by trees, grasses and weeds are the culprits. It's light and dry and spread by the wind.

An allergen is any substance causing an allergic reaction.

Seasonal allergens can be inhaled, swallowed or come into contact with the skin. Symptoms may start as early as March and go as late as November when pollination ends. Spring is the time for tree and grass pollen, while fall is the time for ragweed pollen, dust and molds.

Genetics play a role in how moderate or severe your allergic reactions are. But since we didn't choose our parents, the best treatment for allergies is to avoid the source of allergens. As a seasonal allergy sufferer, you can most likely predict the times you will experience symptoms and take steps to minimize their effects.

- Try not to spend too much time outdoors. Air pollution can aggravate your symptoms. Peak pollen hours are from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m.

- Stay indoors on dry, windy days when pollen will circulate the most. Pollen counts will lower significantly immediately following a rain shower.

- Keep windows and doors closed and use your air conditioner.

- Keep windows up when driving and the air conditioner on recirculate.

- Wash your hands frequently.

- Wash hair and body every night to keep pollen from getting into your bed linens.

- Bathe pets often.

- Don't hang your laundry out to dry - wet clothes are pollen magnets.

- Don't rub your eyes.

- Regular exercise can help keep the nasal passages open and help alleviate congestion.

If symptoms linger or worsen, make an appointment with your doctor. A more serious infection or sinusitis may be present. And if you have allergy medication, take it as prescribed to offset the effects of pollen.

By Nicole Deaner, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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